


How do they grow?

Love
Publications

What does child development mean?

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How This Booklet Can Help

The idea of this booklet is to help parents by explaining some of the milestones children pass during their first five years.

Use of this knowledge, plus your common sense and sense of humor, can help you meet the challenge of raising a family. The hope is that the next time your child gives you a rough time, you'll better understand what's going on.



Your 13-month-old, for example, has just thrown dinner on the floor. To you, it's being naughty. But for your child it's a way of discovering some really important things — like how high the dinner dish will bounce; and my, look how angry mommy gets. Not much of an experiment, but even Einstein had to start somewhere.

There are problems in squeezing a lot of important information into a booklet like this. For instance, the use of examples to illustrate points.

The three-year-old throws a temper tantrum. Mom and dad keep cool and solve the problem. Then the whole family lives happily ever after and rides off into the sunset.

Parents reading things like this just smile. They know it doesn't really happen that way.

This booklet doesn't claim to have all the answers. It has no recipe for perfect parenthood. The examples are drawn, however, from real life. And the theories are the best offered so far to explain the complex and exciting world of the child during the first five years.

Great Expectations

Parents are competitive about their children. That's natural. But there is a danger if parents become overly competitive.



The neighbor's one-year-old is walking alone. Your wobbly one-year-old still clings to the furniture while staggering and swaying around the room. The neighbor is understandably proud of her youngster. Maybe she's a bit smug...and that's putting it politely.

You begin to worry and wonder if your child has a problem.

The fact is that each child is an individual. Each child is different and this can't be stressed too much.

Each child develops at his or her own pace. By the age of three, the child who was slow at walking is dashing around as fast as the early walker. (There's no evidence that a child with rapid physical development—like walking early in life—will grow up any 'smarter' than the child who takes time.)

A helpful way of looking at your child's behavior is to ask: "If there's a problem, whose problem is it?"

Children do their own thing at their own pace. No problem as far as they are concerned.

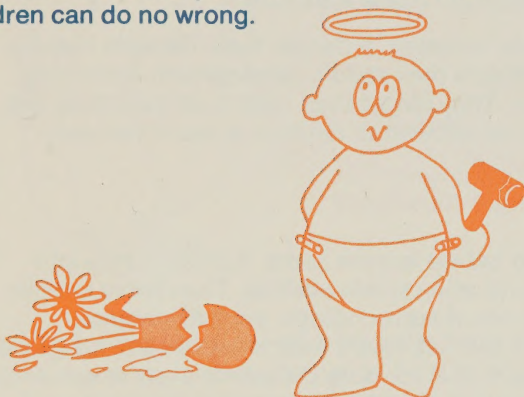
Don't expect your child to match the neighbor's child. Every child has a special growth pattern.

Another such 'problem' occurs with the child who's big for the age group. Johnny is a husky tyke who looks five years old. He's really three and a half.

But mom and dad begin to think if he looks five, then by golly, he'd better act his age. And of course, a three-and-a-half-year-old can't act like a five-year-old. There's a world of difference between youngsters at various stages of development, and especially during these early years.

The Perfect Child

Most of us have met parents who believe their children can do no wrong.



“Oh, my Mary couldn't have bitten him. You must be mistaken.” Their motto seems to be: Criticize my child and you criticize me. Their immediate reaction is *anger*.

Such parents are bound to be disappointed and unhappy. They expect perfection. They forget all the mistakes they made and the problems they had when they were young and learning.

Is My Child Normal?

Parents concerned about something their child isn't doing (or is doing) often ask this question. Sometimes they consult lists like the ones beginning on page 20. These lists outline child behavior at the ages when such behavior usually occurs.

The lists are based on what is considered average. If something is average, it means it is midway on some scale of measurement. It isn't the highest or the lowest, or the biggest or the smallest. It's likely — but not necessarily — somewhere around the middle. When something as complicated as human development is being described, the term 'average' can be misleading. A warning is in order.

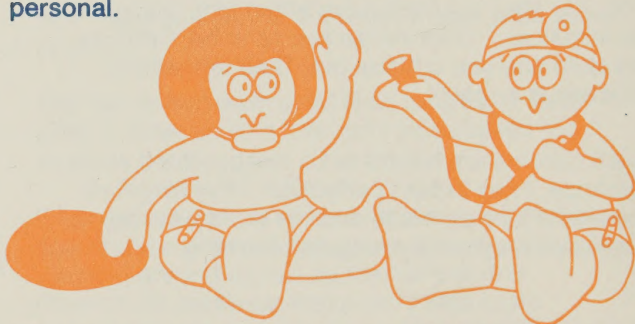
If you read that the average age a child starts to imitate ba-ba is 13 months, this doesn't mean most children behave this way. One child may be ba-ba-ing beautifully at 10 months. Another may just quietly contemplate this ba-ba business until 15 months or so.

Such lists are useful. Parents can compare their child's behavior with an average. If their child is really out of step, they can check with the doctor. Occasionally a problem does exist and the earlier the treatment starts the better.

There is, however, a danger here. Parents may try to timetable their child's development according to a list. They forget their child is an individual and should be allowed to develop at his or her own speed.

Why the Differences?

No two babies are the same. A child comes into the world with certain abilities. Then there are the influences of surroundings, such as parents, friends and television. Add to these such things as his health and the daily parade of experiences. The result is an individual with a style that is very personal.



When we first think about how a child behaves, we think about his nature or temperament. Some children have a quiet nature. Others are called active, or cheerful and so on. And others are lively youngsters who need to be told repeatedly what's right and what's wrong at each age. Many need to have limits or standards defined repeatedly.

Some of these characteristics persist over the years.

Behavior is a two-way street. The nature or temperament of the child influences parental behavior. For instance, the baby who's sleeping through the night at two months (yes, there are a few), will likely have relaxed and rested parents.

But how about parents of the baby who wakes and cries all through the night? You can spot them easily. They look as though they've just won a TV audition for a headache remedy commercial.



Reddened eyes blink from dark sockets. Fatigue presses their shoulders as they plod through each day. Their step is as slow as their temper is quick.

They can only take so much. They need a break, and deserve a medal. They need all the support they can get to help that baby adapt more comfortably to the world.

Or how about those meal times when mom or dad has had a very tough day. The fuse is short and the kids are generating plenty of sparks. If you can anticipate this, you might try for simpler meals or feeding the children beforehand.

A little expression of anger may serve to clear the air and improve things. A major explosion may cause more problems than it solves. Children watch and learn constantly. If mom or dad's angry outbursts are seen as the way to solve problems, you can bet children will use this approach too.

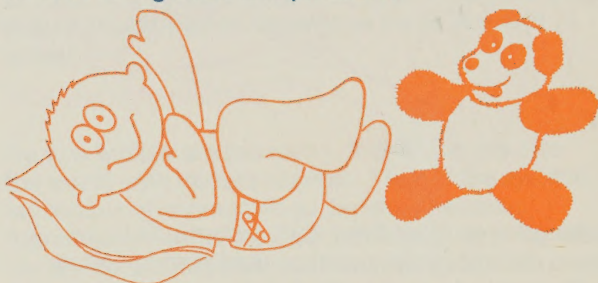
But it must be stressed that it's normal for parents to blow off steam occasionally. Only saints can count to ten all the time.

How You Can Help Your Child's Development

Babies

Babies come fully equipped to begin discovering the world at birth. They can hear, taste, feel and see. Although at first most of the time is spent sleeping, the baby still tries to make some sense out of the new surroundings.

Around six or eight weeks, babies will smile when you smile and talk directly to them. It won't be one of those fleeting little twists of the lips that newborns favor us with — but an unmistakable smile of recognition and pleasure.



This is a sign of major progress in social development — in the ability to get along with people.

Babies need lots of cuddling and loving care. They enjoy little games at a young age — such as peekaboo during a diaper change. Incidentally, this teaches an important idea. Things exist even when you can't see them.

Children have to learn a lot of intellectual skills. They have to learn that one thing can cause another thing to happen. They have to learn how to figure things out for themselves. Babies aren't born with these powers. They start learning them at birth.

During the first two years, the baby is constantly trying to understand the world, figuring out what everything means. Hearing water running usually means a bath. "Yep...now mommy is undressing me. It's tub time."

A baby needs to see loving and familiar faces. A baby needs to hear familiar voices and feel loving arms. It's a need that must be met and is as important to emotional growth as proper food is to physical growth.

Mother usually fills this need but there's no law that says dad can't. In fact, researchers are beginning to rethink some theories about the father's importance to the newborn.

For instance, they now believe babies can tell the difference between mother and father at only two months. And they feel that a warm and loving relationship with father, as well as mother, helps the baby learn the skills for getting along with people.

Parents can also help their child by following a routine. Set fairly regular feeding, sleeping and play periods — but keep the schedule flexible enough to meet your own needs. One theory is that a routine is necessary in helping the baby develop a sense of trust. The baby gets to know that if mom or dad, or the babysitter isn't around, well, that's how it goes. No need to fuss.

At about eight months (often earlier), your baby may cry when strangers are around. Parents are sometimes embarrassed when their baby makes strange — especially if the 'stranger' is really sweet and lovable Aunt Martha. And especially if you've just spent 10 minutes telling Aunt Martha how good your baby is.

Making strange really means that your child is now able to tell the difference between who's familiar and who isn't. Quite an accomplishment! This fear of strangers will soon pass.

Out of the Mouths of Babes

Parents should begin talking to their child at the infant stage. This will help in learning to talk, even though baby doesn't understand what you're saying. Also, babies enjoy listening to sounds. Provide some variety, some high and low tones, a whistle or a song.

And remember, when your child is crying, the muscle control needed to talk is developing.

By the end of year one, your child can usually let you know what is wanted by making rising and falling sounds. Babies will understand more than they can say.

The baby makes sounds randomly. When a sound is close to a word, older children or adults show some excitement. "Wow!" thinks baby and the sound is repeated.

First words are likely to be repeated syllables, like dada or baba. (The M sound in mama is harder to master). First words often have a very broad meaning. For example, 'bow-wow' may mean a dog, a toy dog, a cow or anything furry. It might even mean sweet and lovable Aunt Martha.

Food for Thought

Everybody knows that good food and balanced diets are necessary for good health. But there is a 45-month period when proper nutrition is of the utmost importance. It starts at conception and ends when the child is about three years old.

During the nine months of pregnancy, the child develops at an explosive rate. If the mother isn't getting a good supply of all the necessary proteins, vitamins and such, the child could be shortchanged.

Researchers say the child won't be able to live up to genetic potential. The child inherits factors from parents that will influence how some of the challenges of life are handled. But a poor diet can prevent full development of this potential.

For example, very poor nutrition can affect growth of the brain. And the physical development of the brain doesn't end until 18 to 24 months of age. Other parts of the body such as muscle tissue and the organs are also developing rapidly during this critical 45-month period and require proper nutrition.

The problems resulting from the wrong kinds of food or from eating too much or too little are covered in other publications. They are mentioned here because nutrition is such an important factor in development. Your doctor's advice should be followed.

From Baby to Toddler

Child development is often discussed under four main headings: Physical; Social and Emotional; Language; and Intellectual. These labels are useful tools. (See lists on Page 20). Unfortunately they suggest that development in one area is somehow divorced from development in another.

The opposite is often true. A child must master one skill before moving on. For instance, babies love to put things in their mouths. First it's a fist, then it's anything they can grasp. It's not too long before they're wielding a spoon and feeding themselves. (At first be prepared for as much food on the face as in it.)



Another example of progression in development occurs on that great day — around the 10-month mark — when your baby gets mobile. First it's crawling, or scooting along on the bottom. And when your child learns to walk, look out. Babies at this stage get into everything.

The period — from eight months to 18 months — is believed by some researchers to be one of the most important in the growth of the child's social and intellectual skills.

Just look at the changes and challenges your child faces during this period: learning to walk, to hold things, to eat and drink without help, to imitate others and to find out about everything. Your child is on the move, intensely curious, getting into all sorts of mischief.

For parents it is a demanding period. And how parents react to their child's needs can be a factor in their child's future handling of life on the playground and in the classroom.

A one-year-old is more interested in exploring and learning about the world than in meeting people. In fact about one-fifth of the time is spent staring at things and trying to figure out what they are. We know this because of the work of a research team headed by Burton White of Harvard University.

The researchers wanted to know why some children are so much better in school than others. They started by studying school-age children — then looked at younger and younger children in their search for the answers.

The researchers concluded that the die was cast in the first three years. The children who did well had parents, often the mother, who did certain things to help their children learn and grow.

The first things these mothers did was to make the surroundings interesting and safe for the children. Dangerous things, such as knives and cleaning fluids, were put out of reach. Safe objects, like pots and pans, were put in lower cupboards where the child could get at them. The children were permitted to roam through most areas of the home.



The home was often messy and the pots and pans got some scratches. But mom didn't have to spend half her time as a police officer. These mothers had removed some of the reason for conflicts with their children.

They'd avoided a lot of problems.

Play

A child playing is a child learning. The world is filled with toys; just about anything that can be handled, touched or felt is a learning experience.

There are three basic stages of play you can expect. At first, the child plays alone. This is called solitary play. The next is called parallel. This is when two or more children are playing in the same area. They may be playing at the same time with the same things but they aren't really playing together. Children progress to truly cooperative play after these stages.

The third stage, cooperative play, is when two or three children join in play that would be impossible without each other, for instance, catching a ball or playing house. This usually begins around the age two mark.

Here are some of the things toddlers like to do. They love to move — in all directions and at all speeds. They like to climb. Parents think about climbing things like ladders or step stools. For a child, anything will do.



Children like to climb inside things. If they can't get right inside, part way will do.

They like to pile things up and knock things down. They like to collect things and put them in containers, or carry them around. And they love to dump things out.

They like to handle things, like water, sand or their breakfasts. They like to put things together and take them apart. All these forms of play can be done alone and without expensive equipment.

The researchers also noted that mothers of the above-average children acted as consultant to their children. If the child wanted something, the mother would take 15 seconds or a minute to give the help. Often she'd give a little extra time to show a related idea, or spark curiosity, or praise an accomplishment. She was interested. It taught the child that when help was needed, it was available from an adult.



For instance, the 14-month-old sees a picture of a dog and says “bow-wow.”

Mom encourages: “Yes, that’s a dog. It’s a black dog, just like the puppy down the street. It’s a black, furry dog.”

This type of teaching came in short spurts throughout the day, not in a long session that could overload the child and lead to frustration.

In some cases the mothers had very busy schedules. Some worked full or part-time outside the home, but they still fitted in these consultant duties. And of course, the parent’s positive attitude toward learning didn’t end when their child was three. Children need lots of guidance and encouragement at every stage.

Please note the stress on guidance and encouragement. It’s natural for parents to want their children to do well at school and at play. But too much emphasis on achievement can turn this healthy concern into unhealthy competitiveness. Parents who push their children too far and too fast will end up frustrating their youngsters — and being frustrated themselves. Hardly a recipe for a happy home.

Those Twos and Threes: Terrible or Terrific?

By the time their child is two years old, some parents begin to mutter and wonder why they ever got into the parent business.

It's hard to believe that the gurgling, cooing and cuddly baby has grown so rapidly into a child who can be so exasperating. But being a child can be as tough a job as being a parent.

Put yourself into the two-year-old's place for a minute. At two years of age you are constantly learning to do more and more things for yourself. The independence is great and you want more freedom.

You want to dress yourself. So what if mommy's in a hurry and you're taking all day. You know what you want to say, but have difficulty expressing yourself. You know what you want to do, but can't always manage it. It can be so frustrating. Big people are always pushing you around. You hear things like:

"Oh no, you didn't wet your pants again!"

"Get out of there! Leave it alone!"

"Now you've broken it!"

"Don't put your finger in the baby's eye!"

"Don't make a mess!"

"Eat your dinner!"

"Do that again and I'm telling you . . . !"



Is it any wonder you sometimes get frustrated and angry? Is it any wonder your favorite word is 'No!' Ah, what a lovely word. Stamp your feet and scream. That'll fix her.

Here's a common scene.

The setting is a shopping plaza parking lot. Three-year-old Scott, his mother and shopping cart are heading toward their car. Scott decides he really likes the shopping centre. It's bright and exciting and home doesn't seem so interesting. Scott stops.

"Come along, Scott," says mom, unlocking the car door.

"No!"

"Now Scott, please get into the car. We're going home."

"No! No! No!" cries Scott stamping his foot and refusing to move.

Before long, passersby are watching yet another installment of Tiny Tantrum Time.

But Scott's mother keeps her cool. She tucks Scott and the parcels into the car and they wait in the parked car until Scott quiets down. Then mom tells him about all the interesting things he can do at home.

"And," says mom, "you can help mommy unpack the parcels."

Now Scott's arrival home promises to be interesting.

Note that Scott's mother didn't act upset or change her plans to avoid embarrassment. It's helpful to remember that most of the onlookers have had to cope with the same thing.

Also note that Scott's mother was consistent. Children will continually test parents. When parents say no, they should stick by it.

But since children are individuals, their reactions will differ. One will respond to a firm no and an explanation. Another may have to be firmly held or moved. Sometimes it's difficult to be firm for it may be inconvenient. And sometimes parents just aren't in the mood to clamp down on their child. But if a parent gives in to a child because of a tantrum, the child will learn to throw tantrums. At this age, action is more important than a detailed explanation. Children learn by the actions of others.

Temporary Problems

A child's growth is generally toward more mature behavior. Occasionally a backward step is taken. There are many reasons.

A toilet-trained child may start dirtying pants again when a new baby brother or sister arrives home. The child needs lots of encouragement and praise when things are done correctly. It will help to get over any initial jealousy.

A child who's sick or who hasn't had enough sleep may also behave at a younger level. It's comforting to do familiar things that come easily.

Sometimes a child will take a step forward in one area of development and a step back in another. For instance while learning how to walk, when the delivery man appears at the door, the child clings to mommy and cries. And a few weeks before, the delivery man might have been greeted with a smile.

Children may show fear when mom and dad go out for an evening. As soon as the baby sitter arrives, they start to cry. You may feel guilty and think about changing plans. Remember, you deserve a break. In fact, you owe it to yourselves and your marriage to get out alone occasionally. Don't deny your needs in an attempt to meet all the needs of your children. The healthy approach is a balanced approach. So calmly explain that you are going out. Explain where and why and that you'll be back soon.



This fear of separation may also surface when your child goes to nursery school or kindergarten. You should remain calm, but firm. And reassure your child that you'll be back.

Children often want to carry a favorite book or toy to school. This helps comfort them for it acts like a bridge to ensure safe return.

Help!

When you're having trouble with your child, it's helpful to talk things over with a friend, your doctor or someone in the child-care field.

Another source of information is your area office of the Ministry of Community and Social Services. Each office has free pamphlets in the Friendly, Fair and Firm series. These deal with a variety of common problems — such as toilet training, discipline and jealousy when the new baby comes home. Area offices are listed on page 27.

Discipline

The phrase 'friendly, fair and firm' was chosen for the pamphlet series because it is a good motto for parents. It sums up a positive and helpful approach to child rearing.

When your child 'misbehaves,' be fair. Ask yourself why? Is your child a 'rotten' little kid — or just a little kid? Is it the child's problem, or yours?

It makes you angry when the child yells in the house but you let the same child whoop it up outdoors. When excited it's hard to remember that the rules change on coming inside.

But the fact remains that although some types of behavior are quite normal, they are unacceptable. A positive approach to teaching and consistent discipline can help you deal with it.

The Pre-schooler

Your toddler may be putting several words together by the age of two and master basic grammar over the next two years. At four, a child is able to talk about things that are not present and use words to express emotions, in telling stories, and in describing objects and events.



And can they ask questions! With children from three to five years, it's a never-ending stream of questions.

Although it's often inconvenient, you should take time to answer.

Suppose parent and child are in the car. To three-year-old Janet, the passing scene is exciting. She wants to know what that object is — or what this sign says. It gets tiresome, but a parent should try to answer. She's got a lot to learn.

Sometimes a simple game will make a trip more enjoyable for both parents and child, like asking the colors of passing cars.

By the age of three, children seem to possess energy without limit. Increased strength, speed and coordination mean more demanding activities over the next few years. There are the skills of daily life to master, such as brushing their teeth or getting in and out of clothes. (Don't expect shoes to be tied much before age five. This requires fine motor skills!)

During the third year, relationships with other children become very important. Play becomes more complicated. The child learns to give and take, enjoys being with other children of the same age and enjoys the world of make-believe.

Conflicts are common. It's a good idea to let children work out little problems themselves. But occasional suggestions about taking turns or sharing can help them learn to get along with others.

You'll also notice your child changing when playing with other children. A 'quiet' child sometimes isn't, after getting together with a friend.

One mother of two children, age three and four years, says it's frustrating to take both shopping. They are hard to control and they get into everything. But when she takes only one child along, shopping is a treat. Either child alone is obedient and fun to be with.

The child's experiences with family and friends introduce different points of view. Toddlers tend to think everybody else sees, thinks and experiences things the way they do. But growing older, they begin to understand the difference in people.

Pre-schoolers often can't tell the difference between what they imagine and what is real. Their world of fantasy helps to increase their abilities to reason and to be creative.

Eavesdrop on the conversation of children at play and you'll glimpse this world. Toys become tools useful for tasks unimagined by adults.

Two four-year-olds digging a hole in the sand really aren't digging a hole. They are finding a monster they know is lurking below. But don't worry, it's a good monster.

Five-year-olds sometimes bring home things that don't belong to them. Pointing out that the item is owned by someone else and having the child return it develops the sense of private property. During school years, this sense gets stronger and the child learns what adults expect. At the same time, children learn what to expect of themselves. The rules, routines and values learned are becoming part of that child's set of standards.

When Junior Says '#\$-%!&'!



Many four-year-olds love to use 'bad' words. If they get a rise out of mom or dad, so much the better. In such cases, a calm reaction is best, especially if they learned those words the day you hit your thumb with the hammer. Either ignore the remark or tell them calmly that you'd prefer they didn't talk like that.

Some Parting Thoughts

All parents occasionally get upset and angry with their children. Our hope is that this booklet and the other publications in the Friendly, Fair and Firm series will help you handle these feelings because *they are natural*. They come with the territory.

Although this booklet has talked about temper tantrums and soiled pants, being a parent is much, much more than merely finding solutions to problems.

It's a sharing of discoveries with your child — of the delights of ice cream and of dandelions and of puppy's soft fur. It's a walk on warm spring grass or crunchy snow. It's a comforting cuddle in your favorite easy chair. And it's the soaring joy of tiny arms around your neck and the whispered words: 'I love you.'

Some of the Milestones

This section outlines some of the milestones in a child's development. The examples are listed in the sequence in which they generally occur. It must be remembered that children may accomplish an activity earlier or later than listed.

Physical Development

Birth to Ten Weeks

- ✱ Raises head when lying on tummy.
- ✱ Lifts head when held on a shoulder.
- ✱ Brings hand to mouth. Bodily functions become more regular. Thrusts legs and arms at play.
- ✱ Eyes follow moving objects.
- ✱ Briefly holds toy placed in hand.

Three to Four Months

- ✱ Rolls from tummy or back to side.
- ✱ Head self-supported. Reaches for objects. Rolls from side to back or tummy.

Four to Six Months

- ✱ Lifts head and pulls to sitting position when hand held. Retains two blocks (one placed in each hand).
- ✱ Sits with slight support. Takes toy placed in hand to mouth. Holds toy placed between both hands. Bangs spoon placed in hand.
- ✱ Actively places hands on table (when seated on lap at table). Sits alone momentarily when placed in sitting position.

Six to Seven Months

- ✱ Transfers toy from one hand to another.
- ✱ Pushes from lying to sitting position with one hand when other hand is held. Throws toys purposefully. Shows early stepping movements when held in standing position.
- ✱ Releases toy by dropping it. Takes weight on feet when held in standing position.

Eight to Twelve Months

- Crawls or 'scoots' on bottom. Sits unsupported with hands free for activity.
- Places toy on table purposefully.
- Claps hands. Pulls self to standing position at furniture. Grasps items with thumb and forefinger.
- Cruises around furniture.
- Walks with two-hand support.

Thirteen Months to Two Years

- Sits down from standing without holding on.
- Stands unsupported. Walks with one hand held.
- Walks alone. May try to climb stairs.
- Runs and climbs. Falls less often. More adept with hands.

Three Years

- Rides tricycle. May be fully toilet trained. Can jump and skip.

Four Years

- Dresses and undresses self. Sleeps through night. Drawing more controlled. Tries to reproduce the real world in drawings, rather than giving a name to a random effort.

Five Years

- Balance improves. Draws recognizable person.

Eating and Drinking - The Steps to Independence

Drinking

Birth to Four Weeks

- Sucks and swallows but requires frequent breathing rest with nipple removed from mouth. Feeding is slow.
- Suck and swallow coordinated with breathing. Nipple remains in mouth while resting. Feeding is rapid.

Six to Seven Months

- Sucks from regular cup into mouth as if bottle. Liquid is lost. Lips not closed.
- Drinks neatly from cup held by adult. Tilts head back to drain it. No liquid lost when cup removed.

Ten to Fifteen Months

- Drinks from cup when placed in hands. Supervision needed.
- Picks cup up from table. Spills it when putting it down.
- Picks up cup and places it down without spilling when supervised. May drink the filled cup without supervision.

*Eating**Eight to Twelve Weeks*

- Swallows pureed food from spoon when placed on back of tongue. Otherwise, spits it out.
- Anticipates food by opening mouth.

Five to Seven Months

- Removes food from spoon with lips. Finger feeds chunks of food such as bread or biscuits.
- Munches soft lumpy food with gums.

Ten to Fourteen Months

- Chews chopped table food with gums.
- Loads spoon and takes it to mouth. Process very messy.
- Chews chunks of table food such as meat.

*Intellectual Development**Some examples of play and exploration:**Two to Sixteen Weeks*

- Responds to bell or rattle. May respond to mobile hanging over crib or carriage.
- Observes surroundings.
- Watches and plays with hands.
- Stares intently at hands or objects.

Seven to Twelve Months

- Eyes and hands begin to work together. Inspects objects grasped. Explores with mouth. Shows purposeful cause and effect behavior such as squeezing a toy to make it squeak.
- Looks for dropped toy. Moves to regain an object placed out of reach and resumes play using it.
- Realizing things exist even when they are not seen. (Example: uncovers a toy.)
- Beginning awareness of space and form. Tries to scribble. Looks at pictures in book. Places a small can into a larger can after trial and error.

Sixteen Months to Two Years

- Obtains toy by pulling on string after demonstration.
- Points out body parts and pictures of familiar objects.
- Recalls past events. Looks for missing objects. Understands the idea of one, many, more. Uses objects as a means to an end. (Example: gets on chair to reach something.)

Three Years

- Matches simple shapes. Understands in, on, under. Has sense of order, arrangement, comparison.

Four Years

- Some understanding of past and future. Not always able to distinguish reality from fantasy. Interest in letters and numbers.

Five Years

- Sense of time and number. Clearer memory of past events. Does not understand others' points of view.

Language Development

Here are some examples:

Birth to Four Months

- Crying.
- Coos, chuckles, gurgles when given attention.

Seven to Ten Months

- Listens to own babbling, crows and squeals. Some vowel and consonant sounds.
- Responds to gestures, facial expressions. Heeds 'no-no' and name. Imitates two repeated syllables such as 'ba-ba' and is very vocal.

Twelve to Fifteen Months

- Responds to short commands. (Example: 'Give it to me please.')
- Small vocabulary. (Example: 'Bye-bye.')
- One word sentences and 'jargon' (conversation-like nonsense sounds).

Eighteen Months to Two Years

- Uses gestures and occasional two-word sentences. Vocabulary growing at an increased rate.
- Says three-word sentences. Makes wants known.

Three Years

- Vocabulary increased tremendously. Speaks in short sentences. Asks many questions.

Four Years

- Questioning at a peak. Enjoys humor, fantasy. Tells stories and discusses experiences.

Five Years

- Asks fewer questions. Is more articulate. Language use improves.

Social and Emotional Development

Some examples:

Four to Ten Weeks

- Quiets when picked up.
- Looks at parent's face briefly.
- Recognizes parent.
- Socially smiles at adult who directly smiles and talks to baby.
- Eyes follow moving persons. Looks at own mirror image.
- Knows when surroundings change.

Five to Seven Months

- Imitates two or three familiar gestures such as pat-a-cake.
- Extends toys to others but won't release them.

Eight to Nine Months

- May withdraw or cry at sight of strangers
- Attempts to continue a familiar 'game' during pauses in the play by performing part of the activity.
- Will hit a block on the floor or on another block in adult's hand when shown how to hit blocks together.

Ten to Twelve Months

- Responds to 'bye-bye'. Imitates at least one facial gesture.
- Repeats performances that are laughed at.
- Recognizes when others approve of behavior.
- Enjoys social activities such as peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake.

Thirteen to Eighteen Months

- Starts play with an adult.
- Approaches and watches other children.
- Imitates others. May play in presence of other children, but generally plays alone.
- No concept of sharing. May resist change.

Two Years

- Likes to please. Becoming aware of difference between 'yours' and 'mine'.
- Resists changes in routine. Rigid and inflexible.

Three Years

- Cooperative. Shares with and enjoys friends. More aware of self.

Four Years

- Plays with two or three children. Games may have 'rules'. May be afraid of things or situations.

Five Years

- Plays games with rules. Elementary sense of shame, disgrace and status. Nightmares common. May have imaginary friends. More self-sufficient.

Twenty-one Years

- Takes mom and dad to restaurant. Picks up tab.

Some Additional Reading:

There are many interesting books aimed at helping parents. Check your local library. Here are some suggestions.

Children: The Challenge, Rudolf Dreikurs and Vicki Soltz.

Living with Children, G.R. Patterson.

Loving and Learning, N. McDiarmid, M. Peterson and J. Sutherland.

Parent Effectiveness Training (P.E.T.), Thomas Gordon.

The First Three Years of Life, Burton White.

Infants and Mothers, Dr. B. Brazelton

Toddlers and Parents, Dr. B. Brazelton

Ministry Area Offices

Northern Region

Sudbury

St. Andrew's Place
8th Floor
111 Larch St.
Sudbury, Ont. P3E 4T5
(705) 675-4544

Thunder Bay

710 Victoria Ave.
Suite 301
Thunder Bay, Ont.
P7C 5P7
(807) 475-1345

Timmins

11 Elm Street N.
Ground Floor
Timmins, Ontario
P4N 6A3
(705) 267-7901

Southeastern Region

Kingston

1055 Princess St.
Kingston, Ont. K7L 5T3
(613) 549-6470

Peterborough

263 1/2 George St. N.
Peterborough, Ont.
K9J 3G6
(705) 743-1624

Central Region

Barrie

70 Collier St.
5th Floor
Barrie, Ont. L4M 4Z2
(705) 737-1311

Toronto

110 Eglinton Ave. W.
5th Floor
Toronto, Ont. M4R 2C9
(416) 965-7863

Southwestern Region

Hamilton

499 King St. East
St. John's Place, 2nd Fl.
Hamilton, Ont. L8N 1E1
(416) 525-6431

London

IBM Bldg., 5th Fl.
195 Dufferin Ave.
London, Ont. N6A 1K7
(519) 438-8387



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